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Environment and sustainable development: implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.7/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

I. Introduction

1. At its 37th meeting, on 11 December 2003, the Second Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.7/Rev.1. Operative paragraph 14 was adopted by a recorded vote of 153 in favour, 1 against and no abstentions, while the rest of the resolution was adopted by consensus. A statement on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution was before the Committee, in document A/C.2/58/L.43.

II. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. Under the terms of operative paragraph 14 of draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.7/Rev.1, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, in his proposal for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, to make provision for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United

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Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and its subsidiary bodies, including the seventh ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies.

III. Additional requirements

3. The conference servicing of the Convention bodies namely, the Committee for the Review of the Convention (third session) and the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (seventh session and meetings of subsidiary bodies) in the biennium 2004-2005 would require an amount of $1.4 million on a full-cost basis at current rates.

4. In addition to the provisions for the full cost of conference-servicing requirements mentioned in paragraph 3 above, the expenses for the envisaged travel of conference-servicing staff from Geneva to Bonn to service the meetings are estimated at $325,400. Thus, total additional costs under the United Nations regular budget for servicing the meetings are estimated at $1,725,400. This would represent additional requirements over and above the resources initially proposed under section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services ($1,718,400) and 29E, Administration, Geneva ($7,000), of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

IV. Contingency fund

5. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures were proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned would be implemented only through the redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities would have to be deferred to a later biennium.

6. The potential for absorption of the above requirements within the existing capacities for conference servicing and documentation will be reviewed within the context of the consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates falling under the guidelines for the contingency fund.

V. Action requested of the Fifth Committee

7. **The Fifth Committee may wish to inform the plenary that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.7/Rev.1, additional requirements of $1,725,400 would arise and would need to be considered for appropriation in the context of the review of the consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates falling under the guidelines for the contingency fund to be undertaken towards the end of the first part of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly.**